
**State Government & Tribal
Affairs Committee**

HJM 4025

Brief Description: Proposing a regional presidential primary.

Sponsors: Representatives Appleton, Hunt, Armstrong, Green, Miloscia, Lias and McIntire; by request of Secretary of State.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Prays to President Bush, the Speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives, the President of the Senate and Washington's congressional delegation to adopt a rotating regional primary system beginning with the 2012 election.

Hearing Date: 1/22/08

Staff: Tracey Taylor (786-7196).

Background:

Each of the major political parties officially nominate their candidate for President at their respective national conventions in the summer before an election. Depending on state law and state party rules, when a voter casts ballots for a candidate in a presidential caucus or primary, they may be actually voting to award delegates bound to vote for a candidate at the state or national convention, or they may simply be expressing an opinion that the state party is not bound to follow in selecting delegates. In recent elections, the eventual nominees were well-known well before the actual conventions took place.

Campaigning for president often begins more than a year before the Iowa Caucus, the traditional first delegate selection event, and the New Hampshire primary which is almost two years before the presidential election. For the 2008 primary season, there were several states that changed their primary election dates in order to come earlier in the election season. In response, both the Republican and Democratic National Committees took steps to penalize the states that moved up their primary dates, stripping them of delegates.

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

Summary of Bill:

The Legislature prays to President Bush, the Speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives, the President of the Senate and each member of Washington's congressional delegation to adopt a rotating regional presidential primary system to begin in 2012.

The West region would go in March, then the Midwest region in April, the South region in May and the East region in June. The rotation would move forward in 2016.

The West region includes Alaska, Arizona, California, Colorado, Hawaii, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, Oregon, Utah, Washington, Wyoming and Guam.

The Midwest region includes Illinois, Indiana, Kansas, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, Ohio, South Dakota, and Wisconsin.

The South region includes Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia, Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands.

The East region includes Connecticut, Delaware, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Vermont, West Virginia, and the District of Columbia.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.